



BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Appendix 1



Previous page: From Longman's garden on the Brisbane River at Chelmer. Here he spent the last 14 years of his life, writing his natural history articles, tending his garden and cultivating its wildlife.

Charles Coxen

Coxen was one of those responsible for the interest that the early settlers took in natural history. He was one of the founders of the Philosophical Society, the principal founder of its museum and the man primarily responsible for persuading the Queensland government to take over the responsibility for the museum.

His interest in science and particularly in natural history may have been partly due to the influence of his sister Elizabeth's husband, the distinguished ornithologist, John Gould, who was curator of the Zoological Society, London. Coxen arrived in Australia in 1833 with a commission from the society to collect local fauna^{1,2}. Some of the first Australian birds Gould described before he visited Australia himself, in 1839, had been sent to him by Charles and his brother, Stephen Coxen. In 1839 the Goulds stayed for three months with Charles and Stephen at the latter's property, Yarrundi, on the Hunter River near Scone³. In 1851 Coxen was still collecting birds for his brother-in-law for the supplement to Gould's great work *Birds of Australia*⁴.

Charles Coxen came to Queensland, from Tamworth NSW in 1841, when he formed the third party to take sheep overland from the Hunter River to the Darling Downs⁵. He appears to have lived at Jondaryan Station near Dalby, although it was then registered in the name of Henry Dennis and was transferred to Coxen's name only in 1851. His other properties were Myall Creek (1841-4), Karugu (1846-7), Bimbian (1851) and Daandine (1855-61)⁶. In 1851, at Ryde NSW, he married Miss Elizabeth Isaac of Gloucestershire and took her to 'what were then the boundaries of civilisation, Bimbian, the furthestmost station on the Darling Downs'⁵. They later moved to Daandine, again near Dalby⁵.

Coxen was by no means isolated on the Darling Downs and there were others with whom he came into contact who shared and undoubtedly stimulated his interest in natural history. Possibly one of the most distinguished was explorer Leichhardt — who was 'interested in Nature as a whole, from the rocks on which we stand, to what we have made of ourselves in our environment'⁷. Leichhardt came to the Downs twice in 1844. The first time when he journeyed there from Newcastle and, on 30 March, collected fossil bones from Charles Coxen's property. Then, in October 1844 Leichhardt's party, including John Gilbert, collector for John Gould, set out from the Darling Downs on a 3000 mile journey that took them to Port Essendon, during which Gilbert was killed⁸. In 1846 Leichhardt was again on the Darling Downs preparing for his aborted east-west crossing; and yet again in 1848 — departing on the ill-fated expedition that did not return. Leichhardt named a plant *Myal coxeni* after Coxen.

When Queensland became a separate colony there was a nucleus of people in Brisbane who shared Coxen's interest in natural history and who helped him found the Queensland Philosophical Society⁹. As chairman of the society, in 1861-2, he was instrumental in persuading the government to allocate accommodation in the Windmill for the museum. From December 1862, when the society first elected office-bearers, he was the first vice-president — the governor, Sir George Bowen being president⁹. In September 1871 it was Coxen who was delegated to discuss, with the minister, the geological collections that the society held in trust pending the setting up of a public museum. As a result of those discussions Coxen was made honorary curator of a museum that included the government's geological museum that C. D'Oyly Aplin, the former government geologist,

had set up in the Parliamentary building⁹ as well as the Philosophical Society's museum founded in the Windmill and now relocated in the Parliamentary building (see Chapters 2, 4). Coxen was now honorary curator of the Queensland Museum and he persistently urged the government to provide a building for it¹⁰. Coxen continued as honorary curator until he had persuaded the government to set up a board of trustees in 1876 (see Chapter 14).

Coxen represented the district of Northern Downs in the Queensland parliament and was subsequently chairman of committees (1863–67). He was also a vice-president and honorary secretary to the Acclimatisation Society (1862–73)⁵. However, his pastoral ventures did not prosper and he failed financially in 1850 and again in 1866. In 1867 he went to the Gympie Goldfields. 'On March, 1868, he began his career in connection with the Crown Lands Office, where his strict integrity and unremitting desire to assist and further the interests of settlers won for him the respect and esteem of all with whom, in his official capacity, he was brought in contact'⁵. He subsequently held the posts of Crown Lands commissioner, Moreton Bay, then East Moreton (1870–75); inspecting commissioner Settled Districts (1872); acting Crown Land commissioner, Darling Downs (1874–75); member of the Commission of Inquiry into condition of Aborigines in Queensland (1874)⁵. Coxen 'was known for his sympathetic and trusting treatment' of the Aborigines when he had been on the Downs and his 'understanding and compassion' for them is reflected in his paper to the Philosophical Society on 'The Komillaroy Tribe'⁹.

Charles Coxen 'found time to pursue his favourite study of natural history, as well as to promote a knowledge of other branches of science beneficial to the colony'⁵. He contributed papers to meetings of the Philosophical Society on a range of subjects. He supplied John Gould with a wealth of reliable information and specimens, including observations on the behaviour of the Bower Bird which he made at Stephen's property, Yarrundi⁴. He had a wide interest in developing technology and sent Gould a photograph of the Little Egret². Coxen wrote a section on dugong in Gould's *Mammals of Australia* and a long and authoritative article entitled 'The Yellow-winged Satin Bird' in the *Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser* of 4 April 1874. He was a corresponding member of the Zoological Society.

We can be grateful to him for his untiring work for the Queensland Museum and for those collections of fossils, birds and shells he made with his wife Elizabeth, and which became the nucleus of the museum. However, one of his greatest achievements may have been the style of his leadership of a group of men who believed in and worked for the establishment of the museum—who, by 1871 had persuaded the government to assume responsibility for it so that by 1875 a staff and a board of trustees had been appointed and funds for a building were committed. As Mack remarked 'from the records available the impression is gained that at no time had the authorities been difficult in this matter; indeed they had been consistently helpful'¹¹. This may be a measure of the quality of the man, Charles Coxen.

Karl Theodor Staiger

Staiger was the first professional appointment to the museum. On 19 November 1872 he was appointed government analytical chemist and custodian. Staiger applied himself conscientiously to his dual role. Although his responsibilities for mineral assays were probably more

pressing at the time, he did not ignore the natural history and accepted the universal nature of the museum's responsibilities.

Staiger was born in 1833 at Kunzelsau, Wurttemberg, Germany, the son of Professor John James Staiger and Caroline Koch. He attended the polytechnical school in Stuttgart, and spent 3 years studying chemistry¹².

He came to Australia and worked on various mining fields. In July 1812 he was in Stanthorpe, then the centre of the mining in Queensland, when he applied for the job with the government as analytical chemist and custodian of the museum at an annual salary of £200, soon rising to £350.

He took up duties in January 1873. In his first reports to the minister, W.H. Walsh, on 2 June 1873 he indicated that in spite of lack of adequate facilities he had undertaken 64 assays, and 'I have been moreover daily visited since the office has been established by a number of strangers making voluminous inquiries on various topics of Mineralogy, Chemistry, Manufactures etc. all of which I have endeavoured to answer to the best of my judgement'¹³. He had secured one of the largest rooms in the old Post Office and arranged the named minerals according to the district found. Lack of a scientific library prevented work on the small zoological collection and he urged that this be remedied (see Chapter 13). Optimistically, he commented that he was waiting 'till decisive steps are taken as regards the new museum'¹⁴. He waited in vain.

The board of trustees was formed in 1876 and Staiger became its secretary. He kept meticulous and detailed minutes that reveal much of the museum's early operations. The minutes of the meeting of March 1876 relate that Staiger was doing the work of a curator in all but name and the trustees suggested that he should become the curator. However, the title was not given to him—it was kept for his successor, William Haswell, who took over responsibility for the museum from Staiger at the end of 1879.

Meanwhile, Staiger was attending to a range of activities in the museum. He was a commissioner for the Queensland government organising displays for the Vienna, London and Sydney Exhibitions in 1873, and in 1877 he selected items for prize winning displays in Sydney. He was working with F.M. Bailey, the keeper of the herbarium in the museum, on a monograph of Queensland grasses¹⁴.

In March 1878 the trustees acknowledged their regard for Staiger by asking the minister for Mines to place a sum of £100 on the estimates 'as special remuneration' for his services as chemist and museum custodian up to 31 December 1878; and in August 1878 they appointed a temporary secretary to relieve him of his secretarial duties to the board. He continued as custodian until Haswell's appointment in November 1879. Staiger's good relationship with at least one of the trustees is reflected in the fact that he named his son 'Miskin' after trustee W.H. Miskin. Eventually, toward the end of 1879, he fell out with Miskin when the board appointed Haswell rather than Staiger as curator (see Chapter 3). However, Dr Bancroft, another of the trustees, was to be his physician until his death¹⁵.

After he left the museum, Staiger is listed as analytical chemist in the government chemical laboratory until June 1880¹⁶ and it was during this period that he made one further contribution to international science. In May 1880 the celebrated Russian zoologist, humanitarian and anthropologist Nicolai Miklouho-Maclay came to Brisbane from New Guinea, and stayed with A.C. Gregory, then chairman of the museum board of trustees¹⁷. While in Brisbane, Miklouho-Maclay, an articulate opponent of the labour-trade and other racist policies and practices,

availed himself of an opportunity to further his own investigations on racial characteristics by taking measurements of the cranium and brain of executed criminals—a Malay, a Chinese, a Melanesian and an Aborigine. The Queensland government made laboratory accommodation available in the building just vacated by the museum—the old Post office building; supplied the services of its analytical chemist—Staiger—to assist in the investigations; and lent photographic equipment from the Survey Office. It is probable that Staiger's assistance was relevant to the development of the new preserving fluids that Maclay tested and used at this time^{17,18}.

Staiger's involvement with Miklouho-Maclay ended in August 1880 and he appears to have left the government service. He advertised as analytical chemist from his home 'Staigersleigh' in Edmonstone Street, South Brisbane, both before and after an appointment to the Municipality of Brisbane as public analyst under the *Food and Drugs Act*¹⁹. Through these years he continued to donate specimens to the museum²⁰.

In 1874 he had married Henrietta Pearce the 20 year old daughter of an English gentleman²¹. They had two sons, Rudolph Edward and Augustus William Miskin¹⁵.

The museum's first staff member died at the age of 55 at his home on 5 October 1888 after a two year battle with tuberculosis. In a brief obituary the *Brisbane Courier* stated that 'Mr Karl Theodor Staiger who formerly occupied the position of analyst to the Queensland Government, died yesterday morning at his residence Staigersleigh, Edmonstone Street South Brisbane'²². The article reflects the view of the time that Karl Staiger's work as an analyst of mineral specimens was more important than his work in the museum. Today's judgment might be different.

Charles Walter de Vis

de Vis was born in Birmingham, England, to James and Mary Devis on 9 May 1829²³. He was a distinguished scholar—an exhibitor of Kings College, London, and a scholar of Magdalen College, Cambridge where he took his BA in 1849. He became a deacon in 1852 and was rector of St John's, Breane, in Somerset in 1855. He eventually gave up the church for 'his beloved science'²⁴ becoming one of the hereditary governors of Manchester Natural History Society, at Salford, Manchester in 1862 and was later curator at the Queens Park Museum. In fact de Vis had had considerable experience both in developing and displaying collections before he came to Australia. During this period of his life he became vice-president of the (British) Anthropological Society and was a fellow of the Zoological Society²⁵.

He came to Queensland in June 1870 with the aim of studying its natural resources, especially geology and mineralogy, and of making his living by sending specimens to overseas museums. In November 1870 he arrived in Rockhampton and, with his son George, was collecting around Black Gin Creek, Clermont and Rockhampton. However, it was disappointing that the first lot of specimens he sent back to Europe were lost at sea. After a trip back to England for a visit he returned to Rockhampton where he became librarian at the School of Arts. From 1880 until February 1882, when he became curator of the Queensland Museum, he had been writing articles on geology and ornithology for the *Queenslander* under the pen-name of 'Thickthorn'—the name of his house in Rockhampton²⁴. de Vis was 53 when he became curator. Nevertheless he tackled his job with an energy and enthusiasm that never seemed to flag—he drove his staff but, indeed, he also drove himself—arranging displays, dealing with correspondence, monthly reports to the board,





writing papers and identifying the specimens that found their way into the museum. Mostly he worked on mammals, reptiles, birds and fishes²⁵. However, he also worked on other groups and anthropology. The museum still has a lengthy key he compiled to assist with the identification of spiders. The insects he probably left to the entomologist Tryon. de Vis was forced to retire from the position of curator on 31 March 1905 (see Chapter 3) at the age of 76. However, he remained on the staff as consulting scientist until 1912.

He certainly had had the confidence of the museum board of trustees which had tried very hard to avoid his retirement. In the end the government had ordered it. He also seems to have had the respect of his staff, especially the collectors, Broadbent, Wild and Hurst, who spent long periods in the field, collecting prodigious amounts of material and formally and regularly reporting back to de Vis²⁶. However, he did not get on well with his assistant curator Henry Tryon and at a board meeting on 7 December 1888 he said that he found Tryon 'insubordinate'. Nevertheless Tryon eventually wrote de Vis' biography²⁴. Certainly later on, after Tryon had left the museum, the lives of the two men must have crossed very often. It is probable that they had a mutual respect for one another's achievements.

As well as his work in the museum, de Vis took his part as a scientist in the community. He joined many of the budding societies, was a founder member and president (1888-9) of the Royal Society of Queensland; he was elected corresponding member of the Linnean Society of New South Wales in 1882; he helped in the organisation of the International Exhibition at Melbourne in 1888 and the Indian and Colonial Exhibition in London in 1886 and in the Australian Association for the Advancement of Science meetings at Sydney (first vice-president 1888) and Adelaide (president Biology section 1893). He was a member of the Vernacular Names for Australian Birds Committee, and on a committee to promote scientific exploration of the Great Barrier Reef. Other societies to which he belonged include the Royal Geographical Society of Australasia—Queensland Branch (hon. member 1900), vice-president of the Australian Ornithologists' Union (1910) and the British Ornithologists' Union. He was an 'indefatigable writer' and from 1865 to his death he published 130 scientific papers and articles²⁷. Apart from his numerous contributions to palaeontology and natural history he spent much time building up a comparative vocabulary of Aboriginal language.

While in Rockhampton, he appears to have used the name Devis, but changed it to De Vis or de Vis when he came to the museum. de Vis is the spelling most often used²⁸. The name appears to have been Norman, his parents using an anglicised version, while Charles Walter preferred the earlier style, possibly taking a quiet pride in the fact that his family can be traced through 700 years of English history²⁹. A De Vis was one of the 25 barons who witnessed King John's signing of the *Magna Charta* at Runnymede on 15 June 1215. Later King Charles II presented, to the De Vis of his day, a silver salver inscribed 'to Harry De Vis, the friend and servant of King Charles II, by his King'²⁷. It was a daughter of that same Sir Harry to whom Samuel Pepys referred in his diary:

To Whitehall, where the ball was to be crammed with fine ladies, the greatest of the Court.....By-and-by comes the King and Queene, the Duke and Duchess, and all the great ones.....Of the ladies that danced, the Duke of Monmouth's mistress and my lady Castlemaine and a daughter of Sir Harry de Vis were the best²⁹.

Charles Walter's great-grandfather was the last Devis of Thickthorne estate in Warwickshire where the family had lived for 400 years. Thickthorn was the name Charles Walter de Vis chose for his house in Rockhampton and for his pen-name²⁹.

de Vis had been married before he came to Australia. His wife, Julia née Holmes, and three sons—Edwin, Charles and Harry—stayed in England and completed their education, Charles and Harold becoming doctors. Edwin subsequently went to South Africa. Charles came to Charters Towers in 1881 where he practised medicine. Another two sons, George and Walter, who came to Australia with their father, never did complete their education. Walter is not heard of again. George became a merchant in Rockhampton but appears to have lost contact with his father after de Vis returned to England in the early 1870s²⁴. In 1898, in New Zealand, de Vis is said to have married a widow, Katherine Elizabeth Luckie^{23,28}. The board minutes of 27 August 1898 record that he was granted leave for '3 to 4 weeks'. There was no board meeting in January 1899 and he probably went to New Zealand during that December–January.

de Vis was living at Gaythorn House, Enoggera, when he died on 30 April 1915 at the age of 86, having devoted 30 years to the service of science and the Queensland Museum. He is buried in the Church of England section of the Toowong Cemetery. de Vis' great grand-children by his sons Charles and George now live in Queensland and Western Australia.

Kendall Broadbent

Broadbent was the doyen of the Queensland Museum's collectors at a time when natural history collectors were sought after and collecting was a rigorous and exacting occupation, requiring skill, ingenuity and tenacity. Comparatively short of stature, he was very hard working, a thorough field naturalist and a 'most discerning zoological collector'³⁰. Despite privations he loved the wilderness areas where he worked assiduously in seeking natural history specimens. He was not well educated, but through his observations in the field and from the literature that was available he developed a particular knowledge of Australian birds and their movements and, assisted by Henry Tryon, a good deal of his ornithological knowledge was published during his life. He collected fossils extensively during many trips to different parts of the Darling Downs, but he also collected mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fish, molluscs, crustaceans, insects and other invertebrates and anthropological material.

He was born at Horsforth, near Leeds in Yorkshire on 26 August 1837. His father was a stone mason and his mother before marriage was Elizabeth Bentley. With his parents he arrived in Victoria in 1852 and was engaged in contracting work with his father. After a while, he began to collect zoological specimens. In December 1858 he collected the type specimen of the Rufous Bristlebird and it was named after him—*Dasyornis broadbenti*². The personal achievement of having discovered a new species of Australian bird must have stimulated the young man for it was the beginning of a lifetime of natural history collecting that included the finding of many new species. He collected in every Australian state except the Northern Territory, but mainly in eastern Australia, and he participated in two expeditions to New Guinea. However, the great part of his work was done in Queensland between 1880 and 1900 while collecting for the museum.

He was en route to New Guinea as a collector in 1872 when he was one of the survivors from the wreck of the *Maria* which grounded on

a reef off Cardwell. Aboard were 64 gold prospectors, an engineer — Lawrence Hargrave, Broadbent and a crew, making a total complement of 75 men. The ship sank and two of the ship's boats took 28 men including Broadbent to the mainland. Less than half of those aboard survived, the remainder drowned or were killed by Aborigines³¹. Later Broadbent met Hargrave and taught him to make study skins — a skill that the latter subsequently put to good use when he collected in New Guinea³².

In 1873 he was engaged to collect for Count de Castenau in Cape York and around the Gulf of Carpentaria. However, while there he also collected for himself and in 1876 sold, for £18.17.0, 79 bird specimens from that region to the National Museum of Victoria. In 1875 Broadbent was engaged with others to collect around Port Moresby for specimens that were later sent to the British Museum. It was on this trip that he contracted malaria which recurred at intervals during the remainder of his life. E.P. Ramsay of the Australian Museum employed him to collect specimens for that museum from 1877 to 1879. During 1879 there were 686 bird skins or eggs registered as having been collected by Broadbent in Tasmania and in addition he made collections in South and Western Australia. Ramsay's other contracts-with, and purchases from Broadbent had yielded 258 specimens from Port Moresby and 387 specimens from north Queensland between 1876 and 1878 and a collection of birds from the Darling Downs in 1881.

Broadbent's first contact with the Queensland Museum occurred in 1880 when W. Haswell was director. On 28 May 1880 the board minutes record that collector Broadbent was in the Enoggera area and had sold mammals and birds to the museum. Haswell further proposed an arrangement with Broadbent whereby, in return for his steamer passage-money and £12 a month he would give the museum his entire collections. Trustee Miskin thought 'the arrangement would prove a very advantageous one for the museum' — and so it was to be. For several months thereafter consignments of specimens from 'collector Broadbent' were reported. On 20 August 1880 Haswell reports '214 bird skins, many of then rare, besides mammals, fishes etc. from Collector Broadbent at Cardwell', on 20 September 'another consignment'. On 8 April 1881 Broadbent consigned a supply of formalin, a bundle of cotton and a jar of arsenical soap to the museum by steamer, probably indicating that his contract with it had ended.

He used various methods for collecting his specimens. His Hollis double-barrel shot-gun is now in the technological collection. He was using traps when he obtained the carnivorous marsupial known to the north Queensland Aborigines as the 'Yarrie', as he related to de Vis on 8 February 1889 —

I have the honour to report. Caught the Yarrie at last, just a common tiger cat, after all the trouble. Caught it in a gully in the mountains 6 miles out of Cardwell. had 7 traps (s)et the last fortnight, got some fine lizards caught in the traps.

He also used snares for wallabies. Nets, and apparently on occasion, dynamite was used for procuring fish specimens. For instance Broadbent in a letter to de Vis which he wrote at 'Somerset', Cape York on 14 February 1884:

I could not get dynamite at Thursday Island, would you please send me some whay. I shall want it more on the reefs than I do here.

Early collectors including Broadbent used many methods to transport material back to the museums. They used pack-horses, wagons and carts,

especially for short distances. Ships were used as a means of transport for Broadbent to places in the north such as Port Douglas, Thursday Island, Karumba, and New Guinea. He used the Queensland railways where possible, as for example in the Stanthorpe district in December 1884 to January 1885 and, while collecting in the Charleville area later in 1885, boxes of specimens were railed back to Brisbane. Unfortunately, sometimes boxes were lost in transit; for example, Broadbent in a letter to de Vis from Cardwell of 8 February 1889 wrote:

.....The missing box not come yet, it must have lost the address. Those tickets come off without being nailed. Hope you received the last consignment in good order, 5 boxes, altogether, Steamer Palmer shipped them 26th Jan 89.

On 26 April 1893 the intrepid collector, showing a little pride, wrote to de Vis from the Darling Downs:

I got a pretty good find this month. head and splendid lower jaws of Dipro(to)don. about 9 miles up Kings Creek from Clifton. had to engage a man and spring cart to fetch it home, could not get the cart within a half mile of it, and the fossil across the creek, had it to carry in a box and the(n) wade the creek with it, a bad time of it we had.

During the course of the fieldwork there were periods when the collector employed Aborigines to assist him to procure specimens, especially mammals. For example he paid an Aborigine 15 shillings per week to help him in the mountains behind Cardwell to collect specimens of Lumholtz's Tree-kangaroo, *Dendrolagus lumholtzi*, known to the natives as 'boongarry'. Broadbent wrote in his diary for 25 September 1886 'The natives said it was impossible to carry anything up where Boongarry lives. Pitched camp again and started with 3 natives up to Boongarry ground'. Again, in October 1887, he wrote from Springsure:

I have got the specimens (*Petrogale penicillata*) of the wallaby you require. It is nearly impossible to get them without Blacks. We hunted them in true blackfellow fasion. They inhabit small stoney Volcanic mountains covered with scrub. They clime trees. I shot one on top of a fig tree..... There are no Blacks camped near the Station I engaged four from spring Creek.

Although he used their skills to help him collect specimens he was fully aware of the dangers he faced in the bush alone for Aborigines were not always kindly disposed to white men. Tough and resolute, Broadbent wrote in his diary for 2 January 1886, 'I shall get to Dalrymple Gap niggers or no niggers'. He was worried about the possibility of their attacking him for, on 23 January 1886, he notes in the diary that he —

Shifted camp a few miles down the Gap nothing to get here, not a safe place for a man to camp by himself.

Two days later he wrote:

A good job for me I did clear out of the top of the Gap a mob of Blacks came there Sunday to kill me for flour tobacco etc. about 40 of their Hinchinbrook blacks.

It was not a new experience — on 29 July 1882 Broadbent had written to de Vis:

Blacks are bad. I want a revolver and 100 cartridges. not safe anywhere now out of Cardwell.

Broadbent paid in trade for specimens that the Aborigines brought in to him. From 'Somerset' in 1884 he informed de Vis 'I shall require trade amongst the natives, get nothing from them without paying for it'.

Broadbent faced many other difficulties and privations, often alone,



during his long periods in the field. In a letter from Cardwell on 27 January 1889 he wrote:

.....I have spent a good deal of time after it (yarrie or tiger cat) and gone over some rough country, in fact, I have walked nearly all the flesh off my bones, what with scrambling over stones in rough gullies, through scrubs, and over mountains, there is not much of me left.....

In another letter of 22 October 1890 from Gowrie on the Darling Downs he wrote:

I beg permission to come down for a short spell. I require a new tent, mine torn all to pieces with the great winds here.

Prior to this, in the same year on the 13 March 1890 he had said:

.....Last monday we had a sort of Cyclone, with torrents of rain. The Condamine River is within 15 feet of the bank where I am camped, and still rising. We have here also a plague of mosquitoes and sandflies.....

A couple of weeks later on the same theme he wrote to de Vis about the Condamine River flood and particularly the mosquitoes '.....gets under the blankets, up the legs of your trowsers. bites night and day. I have to eat, sleep and work in smoke'. When Broadbent was collecting in the mountains behind Cardwell, in July 1886, he recorded in his diary that —

travelling is a terror in this country. the grass in the open places in the mountain is 6 feet high broad blady grass cuts like a knife, all the mountain creeks are nearly a swim and then to clime those mountains.....great masses of of lawyer palm tear flesh and cloths all to pieces.

A little later, on 27 September of the same year —

.....The natives pointed out a great conical peak of the mountain and said Boongarry (tree kangaroo) walk about all right I said upp you go, such a journey I never had the first mile up the centre of the gorge through water and over great boulders as big as a house. I could carry nothing, crawling and on hands and knees, and wading until we got to the first spur and then straight up or nearly perpendicular pulling ourselves up by the trees, all dense scrub we climed right to the top.....

Two days later he recorded in his diary —

used up all my trade foodWas four days this last trip living on sugar and bread could not get any game.....except one white cockatoo the whole trip.....

Money was very short at all times and shortage of funds produced extra problems. On 9 August 1887, from Rockhampton, Broadbent wrote to de Vis '.....I have only a few shillings left of that £5 you gave me'. His grand-daughter, Mrs Margaret Thurgood, when discussing privations he had endured, remembered that he hated to see food wasted and he deplored the way many people ate only the centre of lamb chops and left the remainder.

Some idea of Broadbent's engaging personality comes through his letters to de Vis. It is reflected in this account of his visit to Pilton Station where he met the 15 year-old Arthur Davis — later to become Australian author Steele Rudd:

Mr Broadbent, a distinguished geologist from the Queensland museum in Brisbane, arrived at 'Pilton'. He came because of fossilised bones of extinct giant marsupial — the dinosaur — had been found on occasions along the banks of King's Creek and his



mission was to professionally investigate these areas. He was placed in Arthur's care by "the boss" with strict instructions that the visitor was always to be given the quietest horse on the station and he was to accompany Mr Broadbent everywhere he went. "The geologist's" ultimate departure created a void in his life, for he had enjoyed the company of this interesting and educated man, always so ready to impart to his youthful listener some of his profound knowledge on many subjects quite apart from the odd fossils they had dug out of the banks of King's Creek³³.

There were others who helped him in the field. Frank L. Jardine of Somerset, Cape York, was generous and very hospitable towards him as he had been to other early collectors in the region. On one occasion it took the squatter three days to get Broadbent across from Thursday Island to Somerset in his cutter, as the weather conditions made the 45 km crossing a hazardous trip. Jardine assisted Broadbent in field-work around the Cape's northern tip. On 1 May 1884, he organised five men including himself to help Broadbent to collect bowerbird species of the area. The party had the use of nine horses for the project. With long years of observations behind him at Somerset, Jardine discussed bird migrations with Broadbent. Knowledge gained from field-work and no doubt information from Jardine was the basis of his paper 'On the Migration of Birds at the Cape York Peninsula'³⁴.

Broadbent was also associated with Archibald Meston, newspaper editor and writer of the time. Meston was commissioned by the Queensland government to lead a scientific expedition to Bellenden Ker Range, northern Queensland during June-July 1889. Broadbent was collecting for the museum at Herberton at the time and he returned to Cairns where he joined Meston's party. He was to collect natural history specimens while the colonial botanist F.M. Bailey collected plants. Meston described Broadbent as 'a hardworking, contented companion' despite the very wet conditions which made it difficult for all concerned³⁵.

Broadbent also went collecting with Henry Tryon, the assistant curator of the museum. He also acknowledged an indebtedness to Tryon for his help in preparing manuscripts and communicating them to the Queensland Royal Society. After 1893, when he had to give up the field work that he loved to return to Brisbane as an attendant in the museum, his work with the specimens that he had collected was probably his one consolation.

He married Maria Boreham at the Oval, Kelvin Grove, Brisbane on 11 February 1880. He had met her while collecting specimens at the old gold diggings near Enoggera Reservoir, formerly known as the 'waterworks' on the western side of Brisbane. The Broadbents had five children, four of whom survived, one son and three daughters. Broadbent and his family lived at Ashgrove, then Red Hill in the 1890s. In 1903 they moved to 128 Stonesleigh Street, Albion, where he died on 16 January 1911 at the age of 73 years while still on the staff of the museum.

In an obituary, probably written by Hamlyn-Harris, de Vis who with Broadbent had spent the past 30 years in the service of the museum, is quoted as having said:

It would be difficult to find Mr Broadbent's superior, even at 60 years of age. He had every qualification for the work, was only happy exercising it, he was thoroughly honourable and intensely loyal to his friends. I shall miss him very much and shall always hold his memory in deep respect and with affection³⁶.

Ronald Hamlyn-Harris

He is said to have been of 'irreproachable character, a man of the highest integrity, blameless reputation, amiable disposition, rather reserved, quiet more of a theorist than a practical man. Could talk for two hours on the structure of the bee but could not tell you how to preserve the honey a splendid scientist with a strong leaning to natural history and entomology'.³⁷

His achievements while director of the Queensland Museum certainly establish that assessment to have been wrong in one respect only — he was, indeed, a practical man. After years of neglect he established the museum's operations on a firm basis.

He was borne in Eastbourne, Sussex, in 1874. His father was Hamlyn Huntingdon Harris of the 18th Hussars. He was educated in Germany and England and trained in estate management. He became an expert apiarist while managing his father's estate. His DSc was from Eberhard-Karls University, Tübingen, Germany, in 1902, for his investigations on *The Statocysts of Cephalopoda* which he had done at the Stazione Zoologica — the famous Naples marine laboratory. He came to Australia in 1903. Between 1903 and 1910 he was a science master at Toowoomba Grammar School where he had reorganised science teaching. He became director of the museum on 1 October 1910³⁸.

Hamlyn-Harris was the first director to be appointed to the museum as a well-established zoologist. Certainly, William Haswell had been trained as such but his MA from Oxford was positively elementary in comparison with Hamlyn-Harris' DSc, FRMS, FZS, FES. His predecessor, de Vis, had not had any training specifically in science — although he was a keen naturalist and during his life made up through experience what he lacked in formal training. However, it was Hamlyn-Harris who understood more of the back-up services needed in a museum — or indeed in any scientific establishment and he made a particularly significant contribution in that area. In the library he rearranged the volumes and introduced appropriate registration and cataloguing techniques and, having assessed its contents, he made good the obvious gaps in the holdings. He also introduced and rationalised specimen registers. He reorganised the staff and honorary associates were appointed to make up for the lack of a professionally qualified staff establishment. For the first time there was an anthropologist appointed — Douglas Rannie — as well as appropriately qualified support staff — a librarian and a stenographer. Hamlyn-Harris was proud of his scientific qualifications, and protective of the museum's scientific stature. It was probably this concern that caused his exasperation with Wild, resulting in the insect collector's harsh dismissal (see Chapter 9).

Hamlyn-Harris gave the first lectures in biology at the newly founded Queensland University in 1911. However, although he hoped to return to his biological research on cephalopods, he was not able to do that. He published, instead, on anthropological subjects. He was foundation president of the Toowoomba Field Naturalists' Club, 1908 and president of the Royal Society of Queensland, 1916 and of the Queensland Entomological Society.

His other contribution was the result of a personal quality — the long period that many of those he appointed stayed on the staff. He was, in fact, a compassionate man, as evidenced in his treatment of J.D. Ogilby — he managed his salary, bought his clothes, and paid his rent³⁹.

His stay at the museum was relatively short but his contribution was

great and lasting. He resigned after eight years — toward the end of World War I — disappointed that he had not been able to persuade the government to a greater degree of support for the museum. After his resignation he went to Stanthorpe to manage his brother's fruit farm for several years. While there he started a short-lived entomological society whose main function was the co-ordination of pest control in the orchards. From 1922 to 1924 he was in charge of the Australian Hookworm Campaign — doing malaria and filaria surveys throughout Queensland. Then he taught school at Southport. At least one student from that time remembers how stimulating he was as an English teacher — particularly, recalling his dissertation on witches and witchcraft during the class' study of *Macbeth*. These years at Southport could not have been unhappy. He was in the company of classically educated, scholarly and entirely compatible colleagues, one of whom was a Queensland Rhodes scholar⁴⁰. Nevertheless, he was not teaching science and wanted to return to it. He was again involved with filaria when he was city entomologist, Brisbane City Council from 1928 to 1933 — the first entomologist to be employed by an Australian municipality — and was one of those who were instrumental in finding a solution to Brisbane's endemic filariasis problem. During this period he had an exchange of letters in the *Brisbane Courier* with Tom Marshall over his — Hamlyn-Harris' — recommendations for introduction of mosquito-eating fish — *Gambusia assinis* and *Poecilia reticulata* (guppies). He was a lecturer in zoology at the university from 1936 to 1943.

He died in Brisbane on 26 June 1953, survived by his wife, Bertha and their three sons and three daughters.



Heber Albert Longman

Longman was one of Australia's strongest exponents of vertebrate palaeontology and evolutionary theory between the wars. His scientific calibre was recognized in 1946 when he was awarded the Australian Natural History Medallion and later, in 1952, the award of the ANZAAS Mueller Medal for distinguished services to natural sciences in Australia⁴¹.

Born on 24 June 1880 at Heytesbury, Wiltshire, England, his father was a Congregational minister of liberal views who possessed a good library, with the help of which Longman developed an early interest in natural history and archaeology. He went to school at Emwell House in Warminster. In his early years he became much attracted to T.H. Huxley's tradition of rational scientific observation and he was to maintain this trait through life. He came to Australia in 1902, apparently for health reasons. Living first at Toowoomba, he revitalized a small weekly newspaper, the *Downs Post*, and worked as its journalist. This paper evolved into the *Rag* and later the *Citizen* with Longman as editor⁴¹. He met his wife, Irene, in 1902 when he called on her father, the local Congregational minister. She became the first woman to be elected to the Queensland parliament.

While in Toowoomba Longman quickly gained a reputation as a natural historian, developing an important plant collection which he sent to government botanist F.M. Bailey in 1903 (he was noted among local people for his field equipment which included a vasculum and a milk churn). Bailey stimulated his scientific pursuits and ultimately part of Longman's herbarium was sent to Kew. The remainder is now in the Queensland Herbarium.

He joined the museum in 1911, recruited by Hamlyn-Harris who was a fellow member of the Toowoomba Field Naturalists' Club which Longman had initiated. When Hamlyn-Harris resigned in 1917 Longman became



acting director, the position being made permanent the following year. During his 34 years at the museum he published over 70 scientific papers, notably on fossil vertebrates, contributed articles to local papers and spoke to many societies on a multitude of subjects from evolution to Egyptology. After his retirement in 1945 he continued to contribute his column 'Nature's Way' to the *Courier Mail* and through it encouraged a wide audience to be interested in the ecology and conservation of Queensland's wildlife. His love and enthusiasm for every aspect of natural history was apparent to all who read his articles and heard him speak. His lifelong habit of unceasing observation led him on occasion to pursue a spider at night by torchlight and to keep different animals at home to study their life histories.

Longman's warmth and humanity can be seen in the diary that the young Ivor Filmer kept during his years at the museum. He had been on the staff only two days when:

Monday 13 December 1944: Great excitement at the museum this morning—three eggs in one of the live lizard cages were identified as being the product of a male and female Striped-headed Goanna *Varanus gouldii* Mr Longman was quite excited, as were all of us⁴³

The 16 year-old Filmer had just left school, and was enthusiastic about the museum and natural history. Daily, his diary records the tasks he completed and the conversations Longman had with him—encouraging the young naturalist and discussing distribution, nomenclature, biology:

5 February 1944: All the staff seem to be very interested to hear of our hike on Saturday but of course it was Mr Longman to whom I told most of it⁴³.

Filmer recalls that Longman travelled by train from Chelmer:

apparently there was a little clique of back carriage travellers that delighted in conversation of a cultural nature. A good friend and fellow traveller was Sydney May of the University Music department. (He) travelled up Brunswick St. by tram. He habitually wore a long white coat on train and tram. His thinning white hair was long: in those days it was redolent of academia to witness a head of long white hair....

24 December 1947: It was not only my first Xmas party, but I think it was the first time the staff of the Museum had ever celebrated Xmas. The latter was probably discouraged by Mr Longman because of his philosophical beliefs⁴³.

Longman liked nothing better than a good, sound, rational argument, but in private. He was not aggressive—he was too much a gentleman; and despite his good relations with, and ready access to the local press, he never used the newspapers to campaign for the museum (see Chapter 3). Commenting on a letter to the *Courier Mail*, over the signature 'Disgusted visitor', complaining of the lack of lighting in the museum, Longman said—

that the visitors were unfortunate that they visited the museum on one of those dark days, which are rare in Brisbane. He wished that the museum had sufficient lighting for emergency occasions, but adequate installation would be difficult in such a building. The museum always remained open until 5 p.m., whereas other institutions of the same nature closed at 4 p.m. on dark days⁴⁴.

In his career he was president of the Royal Society of Queensland twice—in 1919 and 1939. He played an important role on the Great Barrier Reef Committee, of which he was to be a vice-chairman. He was also a member of the Australian National Research Council. He was a fellow of

the Linnean Society of London, of the Royal Anthropological Institute, and corresponding member of the Zoological Society and he belonged to many societies including the Queensland Naturalists' Club of which he was president, and the international Rationalist Society—being very active in the Queensland branch.

He died on 16 February 1954, age 73, and was buried at Chelmer. His friend, naturalist Alec Chisholm presented the farewell.

George Mack

Mack was director of the Queensland Museum from 1946 to 1963. He was born at Killlearn, Scotland on 2 October 1899. Mack was a museum man—he had assisted in the Hunterian Museum, University of Glasgow and had come to Queensland from the National Museum of Victoria where he had been from 1923. He doubled the staff establishment of the museum and improved both the storage conditions for the collection and the standards of display. He was not able to do very much about the research role of the institution—that was a matter addressed by his successors. Nevertheless, Mack created a basis on which they could build—an institution with a commitment to curation and care of collections and service to the community.

Mack had arrived in Western Australia after World War I in which he had served with the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders 1914–1919, seeing active service in France and Belgium. He joined the staff of the National Museum of Victoria, Melbourne in 1923.

In 1935 he was promoted to the post of ornithologist and while in this position he undertook a part-time science course at the University of Melbourne. He graduated BSc majoring in zoology and geology. In October 1945 he was appointed senior scientific assistant to the director of the museum, H.A. Longman, and was appointed acting director in February 1946, becoming director shortly after. In fact he had come to Queensland as Longman's probable successor^{45–9}.

Although he knew the other Australian museums, he never was able to travel overseas as he wanted to. In 1956 he applied to the Queensland government for permission to apply for a Carnegie Foundation travel grant in order to study museums in the USA, Canada and Europe. It was considered an inopportune time and he was asked to apply at a later date, but he never did so.

He published a number of papers on ornithological and other subjects. He was a president of the Royal Society of Queensland, the Anthropological Society of Queensland and the Queensland Naturalists' Club and an executive member of the Great Barrier Reef Committee.

He was a quiet, frugal man, living a very private life at Enoggera—in the house he moved into when he first came to Queensland. In the late 1950s, after his two daughters, Margaret (McLeod) and Jean (Fearnside) had grown up and left home, he and his wife Mary moved to a smaller house at Aspley. George Mack died, at the Royal Brisbane Hospital, on the 24 October 1963.

Robert Burns, the Scottish poet, whose verse Mack admired and whose sentiments he shared, once wrote 'something in us never dies' and this indeed applied to Mack's life work in the Queensland Museum, for on his labours others have built, and on the steps he made, others have made further progress.